

# DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH



## COUNTY OF SAN BERNARDINO HUMAN SERVICES SYSTEM

- 385 North Arrowhead Avenue - San Bernardino, CA 92415-0160 - (909) 884-4056
- 1647 East Holt Boulevard - Ontario, CA 91761 - (909) 458-9673
- 13911 Park Avenue - Victorville, CA 92392 - (760) 243-3773
- San Bernardino County Vector Control Program  
2355 East 5th Street - San Bernardino, CA 92415-0064 - (909) 388-4600

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
**May 28, 2004**  
**PHD# 4-40**

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**(909) 387-4692**  
**(909) 356-3805 (after 5 p.m.)**

### **WEST NILE VIRUS CONFIRMED IN 75 DEAD BIRDS IN SAN BERNARDINO COUNTY**

Also serving the cities of

Adelanto	Montclair
Apple Valley	Needles
Barstow	Ontario
Big Bear Lake	Rancho Cucamonga
Chino	Redlands
Chino Hills	Rialto
Colton	San Bernardino
Fontana	Twentynine Palms
Grand Terrace	Upland
Hesperia	Victorville
Highland	Yucaipa
Loma Linda	Yucca Valley

*West Nile Virus (WNV) has been detected in 75 additional dead birds in San Bernardino County. Of the 75 WNV-positive dead birds, 73 were American crows and 2 were Scrub Jays. The test results were received from the State Department of Health Services and the Center for Vector-Borne Disease Research at UC Davis Friday afternoon, May 28, 2004. The dead birds were collected from May 14<sup>th</sup> to May 21<sup>st</sup> in the cities of Bloomington, Colton, Fontana, Highland, Loma Linda, Ontario, Redlands, Rialto, and San Bernardino. This is the first time dead birds collected in the cities of Colton, Loma Linda and Redlands have tested positive. These findings bring the total of WNV-positive dead birds in San Bernardino County in 2004 to 84 (82 American crows and 2 Scrub jays). The first WNV positive dead bird was confirmed on May 14<sup>th</sup>, and eight additional birds on May 21, 2004. These results confirms that WNV activity is greatly elevated in the County and vigilance by the community is requested to identify and report all mosquito-breeding sources to the Vector Control Program.*

*“San Bernardino County Vector Control staff will be distributing fact sheets and looking for water sources within the vicinity where the birds were collected,” said Terri Smith, Vector Control Program Manager. The Vector Control Program is continuing its efforts in public education, active vector control operations and surveillance.*

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*Since mosquitoes lay their eggs on standing water, residents are encouraged to look for and eliminate any standing or stagnant water on their properties. Pools and ponds left un-chlorinated are a major source of mosquito breeding and residents are strongly urged to keep their pools clean. Green pools impact entire neighborhoods, and mosquitoes breeding in such pools fly over property lines to bite people several blocks away. Please report green pools and other sources of mosquito breeding to San Bernardino County Vector Control Program at (800) 44-ABATE or (909) 388-4600.*

“The public should be aware that the main source of West Nile virus infection is mosquito bites, not birds,” said Dr. Eric Frykman, Public Health Officer. “When birds are bitten by infected mosquitoes certain kinds of birds, especially crows, die, but the birds themselves do not pose a public health risk to the public. Dead birds are only an indicator that there is a local virus activity and mosquitoes in the area may be carrying the virus.” ***People should not attempt to catch or handle sick birds. If the circumstance requires handling sick or dead birds please use gloves or plastic bag. People finding dead birds on weekends can double bag them and throw them into the trash bin since the State and local vector control agencies are not picking up dead birds for testing during the weekend. On any day of the week residents can call the California Department of Health Services WNV hotline at 877-WNV-BIRD to report dead birds, the phone are however manned during the week. On weekends or after hours residents can leave a message and will receive a call back the next business day. Dead birds may be reported to the State DHS online at [www.westnile.ca.gov](http://www.westnile.ca.gov).***

*Less than 1 percent of individuals, primarily elderly and those with lowered immune systems, may develop serious illness such as encephalitis and meningitis. Most individuals who are infected with WNV will not experience any illness. Others will have only mild symptoms, such as fever, headache and body aches. Transmission of WNV from human to human generally does not occur.*

*San Bernardino County citizens can protect themselves from mosquito bites by taking the following precautions:*

- *Avoid spending time outside when mosquitoes are most active, especially at dawn and dusk.*

- *Wear long pants and long-sleeved shirts when outdoors.*

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- *Apply insect repellent containing DEET. Follow the label directions when using any repellent.*
- *Make sure that doors and windows have tight-fitting screens. Repair or replace screens that have tears or holes.*
- *Eliminate all sources of standing water on your property that can support mosquito breeding.*

*Since horses are susceptible to WNV and a vaccine is available for horses, horse owners are advised to contact their veterinarians for timely vaccinations.*

*For all San Bernardino County residents in need of WNV information please visit [www.sbcounty.gov/dehs](http://www.sbcounty.gov/dehs) or call the San Bernardino Vector Control Program at 1-800-44-ABATE or 909-388-4600. If you are a resident of the cities of Montclair, Upland, Rancho Cucamonga, Ontario, Chino or Chino Hills your vector control services are provided by the West Valley Mosquito and Vector Control District, and you call them at 909 627-0931.*

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